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GENERAL

1. SC discussion of Ambon dispute opposed--US Ambassador Cochrane at Jakarta expresses the opinion that "most serious international complications" could arise if the UN Security Council discusses the current Ambon dispute. In addition to the opportunities offered to the Soviet Union by such a debate, Cochrane believes that if the matter comes before the UN the whole question of the powers and composition of the UN Commission for Indonesia will be aired. Such a development might prejudice any chances of The Netherlands and Indonesia reaching agreement on the disposition of New Guinea and might also open the way for India's participation in UNCI and an undesirable extension of Indian influence in Indonesia. Cochrane also believes that the SC debate would arouse violent Dutch-Indonesian recriminations, which have thus far been covered up, and that the resultant incitement of sensitive national feeling in Indonesia could cause the dissolution of the Dutch-Indonesian union and the loss of all Dutch major interests in Indonesia.
2. French pessimistic over Indochina--In a conversation with US Minister Bohlen in Paris, Baeyens, Director of Far Eastern Affairs of the French Foreign Office, expressed the view that the Letourneau-Juin mission to Indochina is not likely to accomplish much in the face of the serious military situation. Baeyens pointed out that it is of no use to send new recruits to Indochina, reinforcements cannot be sent from metropolitan France and can be "ill spared" from North Africa. Baeyens also anticipates a stormy debate on Indochina when the French National Assembly convenes. Bohlen comments that Baeyens may be deliberately assuming a pessimistic attitude in an effort to support French appeals for UN aid.

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3. British views on French-Indochinese relations--The UK Foreign Office has informed US Embassy London that at a recent conference in Singapore with British officials, General Carpentier, French Commander in Indochina, expressed his awareness of the need for political action to strengthen the weak Vietnam Government. Carpentier said that the French have given Vietnam more responsibility than is generally realized, and that some means must be found to convince world opinion as well as the Vietnamese of the sincerity of French intentions to transfer control to the Vietnam Government as soon as possible. Carpentier expressed the belief that the greatest contribution the UK could make would be to impress upon India that the French were sincere in this regard and that it was of vital importance to prevent the Chinese Communists from overrunning Indochina. According to US Embassy London, the Foreign Office, believing it is up to the French themselves to win over Nehru, is planning to suggest to French Foreign Minister Schuman that mere implementation of the 8 March agreements is inadequate under present circumstances and that the French Government should issue a formal statement of intention to grant Vietnam independence within a fixed period of perhaps ten years.

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